

June 20, 2001

TO: Governor Musgrove
FROM: Sewell
RE: Press questions
CC: Bill Renick

1) Pam Hamilton with The New York Times editorial board has called with some questions regarding the teacher pay raise issue. Here's a quick rundown of what she's asking and suggested answers:

- Q: Was the \$337.9M teacher pay raise legislation offered in partnership with Amy Tuck?
- A: *No. Governor Musgrove presented this plan to the Mississippi Legislature during the 2000 legislative session. It is part of his overall effort to recruit and retain the best teachers for the children of Mississippi.*
- Q: Was this plan offered in reaction to teachers leaving Mississippi to teach in other southeastern states?
- A: *To some extent, the legislation was an effort to keep Mississippi's teachers in Mississippi classrooms. It also focused on making education a priority in Mississippi, and investing in those who help train the future workforce and leaders of the state.*
- Q: The projected numbers (see attached sheet, faxed by Lisa to Pam on 6/13/01) for the five year plan only go through the year 2005; why not 2006?
- A: *The \$337.9M teacher pay raise legislation was signed by Governor Musgrove in May 2000. The plan is scheduled to raise the teacher pay average in Mississippi to the southeastern average (beginning with the 2001-02 school year) by the 2005-06 school year – a total of five years.*
- Q: How were the increments in the pay raise for each year determined?
- A: *(I am trying to get this information now).*
- Q: How many teachers got a raise this first year, and how much was it?
- A: *Approximately 30,000 teachers will receive a \$500 payment this year. However, because of the 5 percent provision on revenue growth put into place by the Legislature, the effort to help teachers has been weakened. Governor Musgrove is committed to the removal of the provision and the full implementation of his teacher pay plan.*

- 2) I spoke with Peyton again regarding the Capitol Defense Counsel issue. An offer has been made to Tom Fortner for the director's position, and Peyton is waiting on his response.
- 3) Regarding the press conference with DHS to announce the EBT contract with Lockheed Martin, do you want to do it in the capitol or at DHS? I would suggest we go ahead and do it in the 2nd floor rotunda; doing it at DHS might fan the flames of a dying story.
- 4) Regarding the e-mail from Shannon McMullan about setting up some press availability next week in Columbus. Do you want to limit it to the columnist from the Dispatch, David Evans, that she mentioned, or do you want to invite others?
- 5) Mary Weiden would like to have you on her talk show when you have time.
- 6) A talk radio personality out of Lansing, MI, wants to have you on his show for about 15 minutes when we can schedule it. His name is Phil Arthurhultz; he's the former majority leader of the Michigan Senate, where he served 16 years. He's had some legal problems with the state since he resigned. His show is sandwiched between G. Gordon Liddy and Bruce Williams (financial talk). Ronnie Shows has done this show once. I don't see any real reason to do the show, except to get some more positive exposure north of the Mason-Dixon.
- 7) Tommy Parker with WBYP in Yazoo City would like to do a 5 minute radio interview when possible. We should probably do this, but it's not pressing.
- 8) The Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce would like you to do a welcome/introduction as part of their presentation to the annual conference to the Community Development Society (they will be hosting the conference in Cleveland in 2002). They would like a video done for your presentation, but we don't have time for that. Should I offer them a letter?
- 9) The Mississippi Economic Development Council would like to use your picture and a welcome letter from you on their website. I don't know much about the MEDC; should we pass?